

tenure as President, he prided himself as a "steward of the people". Mrs. Virginia Strickland Rogers, whether consciously or not, has lived and continues to live by this motto as well. She has been a public servant and a distinguished member of her community for most of her lifetime. She is an active member of her church, the Cistern Hill Missionary Baptist Church, where she sits on the church's Board of Mothers and February Club. When she is not in church, Mrs. Rogers, who is a retired food service worker, drives the elderly in the community to their doctors' appointments and escorts them on shopping excursions. The latter of these tasks she does not mind though, because she reportedly is an "avid shopper". Also, in her spare time, Mrs. Rogers loves to show off her "green thumb". She enjoys gardening and is known to tinker around in her garden for hours at a time.

I cannot even begin to imagine the volumes of historically significant events Mrs. Virginia Rogers has witnessed with her own eyes over her lifetime. The town of Como is lucky to have such a resident who is so involved and committed to community. I hope that other members follow her example as well.

Among the celebrants at Mrs. Rogers' "centennial bash" will be her friends in the community and also her 10 grandchildren, 34 great grandchildren, and 35 great great grandchildren.

Happy one-hundredth birthday Mrs. Rogers! I wish you the best on your day and hope you see many more.

#### A TRIBUTE TO ROBERT HERTZBERG

#### HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 5, 2002*

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, today California says goodbye to Assembly Speaker Robert Hertzberg and says hello to incoming Speaker Herb Wesson. Speaker Hertzberg served in this position with abundant personal energy and unbridled enthusiasm. He clearly loved this job and worked hard for the people of California.

Hertzberg is affectionately known as "Speaker Hugsberg" for his propensity to enthusiastically embrace friends, foes, and strangers. Indeed these famous hugs have spread beyond California to many of us on Capitol Hill and most recently to members of the Hazardous Materials team charged with decontaminating the Hart Senate Office building.

These hugs will never end, but Hertzberg's term-limited position as Speaker ends today. Speaker Hertzberg will also leave the Assembly seat he has represented in the Legislature since 1996 at the end of the year. Speaker Hertzberg's presence in the institution will far outlast his two years as Speaker and he leaves a permanent mark on the State Capitol.

Hertzberg instituted some groundbreaking changes during his brief tenure. He opened an on-site childcare center and upgraded technology throughout the Assembly. He founded the Capitol Institute, which now bears his name, to establish innovative training courses for freshman Members and legislative staff. California is the world's fifth largest economy

and Speaker Hertzberg opened the Speaker's Office of International Relations. He injected a humorous touch of his heritage into the Capitol's culture by publishing a guide on Yiddish, so everyone in the Legislature and Capitol Press Corps could translate the colorful phrases he so frequently uttered during floor sessions.

Hertzberg understood working together means just that and maintained a continuous presence in Washington, D.C. through an Office of Federal Relations. He was quick to point out that what happens in Washington, D.C. matters in California. He frequently led delegations of legislators to D.C. to discuss state issues with federal officials. Hertzberg was determined to work with all of us in Washington, D.C. to maximize California's share of federal dollars.

Hertzberg is a gifted and tireless legislator, who worked to enact long-needed reforms of California's foster care system, significantly expand access to low-cost health insurance for working families, and help pass the two largest park bonds in state history. He was also the lead negotiator during extended discussions that led to the passage of the largest school construction bond in state history.

After September 11, he moved quickly to establish a statewide task force to assess the impact of terrorism on California's economy and to recommend steps to improve public safety and restore public confidence. He visited Washington to meet with federal officials and coordinate terrorism preparedness and response activities. In December, he led a delegation to Taiwan and Japan, to address post-September 11 tourism and to promote trade with California.

As we celebrate Speaker Hertzberg's achievements, I wish him all the best in his next endeavor. I know he will be extremely successful. All the best for the bright future to Speaker Robert Hertzberg, his wife Dr. Cynthia Telles-Hertzberg, and sons Daniel, David, and Raymond.

#### REMEMBERING SUKHBIR SINGH OSAN

#### HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 5, 2002*

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I was saddened to hear of the passing of Khalistani journalist Sukhbir Singh Osan. He died of a heart attack on January 19, 2002. Mr. Osan was only 31 years of age.

Mr. Osan was a terrific reporter who exposed many scandals through his website, Burning Punjab. He reported many stories showing India's pattern of terrorism against its own people. In addition to running his website, he wrote for several Indian newspapers.

The Indian government had banned the viewing of Burning Punjab in Punjab and a few neighboring states. When that did not shut down the site, India brought a fake criminal case against Burning Punjab, falsely claiming it was a "newspaper" operating out of Punjab. These actions make it clear that Mr. Osan's reports were greatly disturbing to the Indian government.

Sukhbir Singh Osan was a courageous reporter, one of the few who would stand up to

the Indian government. He will be greatly missed by the people whose interests he served, the Sikhs of Punjab, Khalistan, and by all the people who care about freedom in South Asia.

The Council of Khalistan put out an excellent press release on Mr. Osan's passing. I am placing it in the RECORD in his memory. In addition, I would also like to insert a February 1, 2002, article from PPA News regarding the killing of Kashmiris by Indian soldiers.

#### IN MEMORY OF S. SUKHBIR SINGH OSAN

LONGTIME JOURNALIST, FOUNDER OF BURNING PUNJAB, EXPOSED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, REPORTED ON FREEDOM STRUGGLE—GOVERNMENT HAD FILED FALSE CASE AGAINST BURNING PUNJAB, BANNED IT

WASHINGTON, DC, January 21, 2002.—Sukhbir Singh Osan, 31, journalist and founder of the website Burning Punjab (<http://www.burningpunjab.com>), died of a heart attack over the weekend. Sardar Osan also wrote for several Indian newspapers.

"The passing of Sardar Osan is a great loss for the Sikh Nation," said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan. The Council of Khalistan is the government pro tempore of Khalistan and leads the struggle to liberate the Sikh homeland, Khalistan, which declared its independence from India on October 7, 1987. "He was an excellent reporter and a stalwart Sikh who exposed the human-rights violations against the Sikhs by the Indian government and reported on the Sikh freedom struggle," he said. "His website, Burning Punjab, is one of the best sources available for news from Punjab, Khalistan." Osan was also a lawyer.

Recently, the Indian government filed a false case against Burning Punjab, falsely claiming it was a "newspaper." The Indian government had banned the viewing of Burning Punjab in Punjab and elsewhere in northwest India. A Deputy Inspector General was specifically assigned to "deal with" Sardar Osan. "I think the stress from that false case may have brought about his heart attack," said Dr. Aulakh.

"Sardar Osan was one of the leading voices in exposing the Indian government's repression of the Sikhs," Aulakh said. "He exposed phony Sikh leaders such as S.S. Mann, Dr. Jagjit Singh Chohan, Didar Singh Bains, and others. This was an extremely important service," said Dr. Aulakh.

According to a report in May by the Movement Against State Repression, India admitted that 52,268 Sikh political prisoners are rotting in Indian jails without charge or trial. Many have been in illegal custody since 1984. The Indian government has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984. Over 75,000 Kashmiri Muslims have been killed since 1988. In May, Indian troops were caught red-handed trying to set fire to a Gurdwara (a Sikh temple) and some Sikh houses in Kashmir. Two independent investigations have proven that the Indian government carried out the March 2000 massacre of 35 Sikhs in Chithisinghpura. In August 1999, U.S. Congressman Dana Rohrabacher said that for Sikhs, Kashmiri Muslims, and other minorities "India might as well be Nazi Germany."

"The service Sardar Osan gave to the Sikh Nation was immense," said Dr. Aulakh. "He is one of the few people in Punjab who was not afraid to tell the truth. The Sikh Nation will miss him very much," Dr. Aulakh said. "On behalf of the Sikh diaspora, I would like to offer my condolences to Sardar Osan's family. I can only hope that Burning Punjab will be continued in his memory."

[From the PPA News, Feb. 1, 2002]

INDIAN SOLDIERS KILL 376 KASHMIRIS IN JANUARY 2002, 107 WOMEN, CHILDREN AMONG KILLED IN POLICE CUSTODY

ISLAMABAD (PPA).—The Indian army during its genocidal operations in the month of January 2002, killed 376 innocent citizens in held Kashmir including 107 killed in custody.

According to statistical data compiled by the Research Section of the Kashmir Media Service, those who fell victim to Indian army's brutalities included 246 men, 11 men and 12 kids.

During the month under review, 625 common people were tortured or critically injured by the Indian troops in the course of crackdowns upon villages, towns and cities. 630 people were arrested during the outgoing month without any valid charge against them while 139 houses and shops were arsoned by setting them on fire on using dynamite blasts.

Twenty-one persons had been kidnapped or reported missing. Relatives of these persons forcibly disappeared by the Indian army have no access to them and they are worried about their missing loved ones.

Molestation of women is one of the weapons being used by the Indian forces to terrorize people and 32 cases of gang rape and molestation were recorded during the month under review. Police and civilian authorities are reluctant to register complaints in this behalf and the victims are left to suffer their fate. The army personnel even threaten their victims of dire consequences if the matter was reported to the authorities.

#### TRIBUTE TO OFFICER JOHN SKALA

#### HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 5, 2002*

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to call to your attention the life of an American hero, Officer John Skala of the Port Authority Police Department. Officer Skala of Clifton, New Jersey, was killed in the Line of Duty while heroically responding to the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

As the tragic events of that fateful morning unfolded, Officer Skala was assigned to the Lincoln Tunnel Command. He immediately responded to help evacuate the towers after the first plane struck World Trade Center Tower One.

September 11, 2001 has emblazoned so many unforgettable images in our minds. Perhaps none is more vivid, however, than that of courageous men and women in uniform working so valiantly to save the lives of others. It is therefore only fitting that Officer Skala be honored, in this, the permanent record of the greatest freely elected body on earth.

John Skala was born in Passaic, New Jersey and attended high school at nearby Clifton High. At the age of twenty-two, he received an appointment to the Port Authority Police Department. His distinguished career in law enforcement showed him to be a man with the courage of a lion, yet also someone who had a kind and gentle heart, willing to help anyone in need.

A recipient of two Meritorious Service Awards, Officer Skala exhibited the high standards of excellence associated with the

traditions of the PAPD. From assisting in the arrest of armed suspects to the performance of first aid during extreme conditions, John Skala was a public servant in every sense of the word.

Officer Skala's dedication to serving the community at large extended far beyond his work at the PAPD. He dedicated his free time to serving as a paramedic with the Passaic-Clifton Mobile Intensive Care Unit, as a member of the Ukrainian American Youth Association, and as a volunteer with the New Jersey Special Olympics and the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation. John Skala was a hero, both on the front lines and behind the scenes.

He has touched countless lives for the better, and we are all better for having him as part of our American family.

On Tuesday, September 11, our American family was attacked in a way we had only seen in our very worst nightmares. The actions carried out on the people of this nation were unspeakable acts of war, targeting the very foundation of what makes us Americans. That day we all witnessed the very worst of mankind.

What the perpetrators of these acts did not realize was the unwavering commitment to liberty and humankind felt by Officer Skala and his fellow heroes. The bravery and love he exhibited in the face of terror make him an example for us all.

We will honor Officer John Skala by trying to live our lives as he lived his. We will honor John by loving his family as he did, and continuing his work to make our community a better place.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, the City of Clifton, John's family and friends, myself, and a truly grateful nation in honoring the life of a great American, Port Authority Police Officer John Skala.

#### “REWARDS THAT FOLLOW GENEROUS HEARTS”

#### HON. BOB BARR

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 5, 2002*

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, something wonderful recently occurred for many folks in Rome and Floyd County, Georgia. Steve Edwards, owner of a local insurance company in Rome, and his wife Marie, read of the plight of 1200 families in Floyd County who had their gas service discontinued for lack of payment of the previous year's gas bills.

Steve and Marie read of the plight of these families and knew they had to do something. They could not save every family, but they could save at least one. They made a gift to the local Salvation Army for one family's unpaid gas bill. The sense of reward was so powerful, the Edwards decided other families might want to experience it as well. With no budget and no organization, Steve began to challenge families within the First Baptist Church of Rome each to pay for one family's gas bill. The response to his challenge was overwhelming. His vision quickly spread beyond their congregation and beyond Baptists. He believed there were enough generous Christians in Floyd County to turn on the heat for the remaining 1180 families. Steve called

an impromptu meeting of various helping organizations, and “One Family helping One Family” was born.

Joel Snider, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Rome, expressed the enormity of the situation when he stated, “Imagine being 80 years old and in poor health. All your income is represented by the \$600 per month Social Security check that arrives each month. You pay \$150 a month for the portion of your prescriptions not covered by Medicare. The remaining \$450 covers rent, groceries, phone, utilities, and everything else. Then one day, you receive a gas bill for \$800. The meter is running on your current bill also. What do you do? How do you ever scrape together enough money to catch up?”

“One Family Helping One Family,” while working with Good Neighbor Ministries, the Salvation Army, and Floyd County Baptist Association, have helped 167 families as of January 18, 2002. Four hundred and seventeen total donations had been received by these agencies. Many contributions came from individuals and families; however, some contributions represented the combined efforts of Sunday School classes and student groups. The total amount given up until that date was \$112,522. Every penny has gone to help a family in need.

The entire community, including the staff at Rome Housing Authority, Atlanta Gas Light Company, the staff of the “Rome News-Tribune”, Rome/Carrollton District of the United Methodist Church, Good Neighbor Ministries, Major Kerns of the Salvation Army, Lynne Barton at Info Line, Bruce Day at Floyd County Baptist Association, Susan Seagraves, John Pinson, Armin Maier, Mary and Allen Shropshire, Doug Walker, and many others, have pulled together.

Imagine, if you will, what might happen if each and every community had a “Steve Edwards?” We owe a debt of gratitude to each person who has contributed to this effort. As Pastor Snider so eloquently phrased it in the “Rome News-Tribune” in December, “On behalf of all the families that are warm today because of your gift, I ask God to grant you the richest blessings of this holiday season. May the rewards that follow generous hearts be yours into the New Year.” Amen.

#### TRIBUTE TO MARGARET GOBLE MADIGAN OF LUTHERS MILLS, PENNSYLVANIA

#### HON. DON SHERWOOD

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 5, 2002*

Mr. SHERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, it is with a profound sense of loss that I inform the House that on Sunday, January 20, 2002, Margaret Goble Madigan of Luthers Mills, known across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as Peggy, passed away.

Although Peggy Madigan is deserving of many superlatives, to say that she was known across Pennsylvania is no exaggeration. She was the wife of Senator Roger Madigan, and she was known and loved by the many individuals whose lives she touched. She was truly unforgettable.

Peggy had an exceptional grace about her that can only come from a deep love of others. Her son, Nick Madigan, in his moving eulogy, described her rare ability to treat every